THE Reconstructionist

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REALITIES AND VALUES *CORRESPONDENCE*

edicated to the advancement of Judaism as a religious civilization, to the upbuilding of rael's ancient homeland, and to the furtherance of universal freedom, justice and peace.

the Reconstructionist

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DITORIALS

OT PRINCIPLES UT INTERESTS

THE United States Senate has adopted the Palestine esolution. The Foreign Affairs Comit- e of the House of Representatives has pproved it, and the Resolution will prob- bly soon be adopted by the House of epresentatives as well. This action is merited rebuke to President Truman nd to the whole hypocritical policy of ie British Foreign Office and our own epartment of State with reference to alestine. The Resolution calls upon our overnment "to use its good offices with ie Mandatory Power to the end that alestine shall be opened for free entry to ews into that country to the maximum f its agricultural and economic potentia- ties, and that there shall be full oppor- unity for colonization and development o that they may freely proceed with the pbuilding of Palestine and the Jewish Jational home and, in association with all lements of the population, establish Pal- stine as a democratic commonwealth in vhich all men, regardless of race or creed, hall have equal rights." Senator Con- ally, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate, was the only nember of that Committee to oppose it. He did so on the ground that it would "embarrass the President in the performance of his international duties, and would be a hindrance in bringing about an understanding with Great Britain."

But why should the Resolution be embarrassing to the President? The President himself had urged mass migration of Jewish displaced persons to Palestine, and the Resolution commends him for doing so. The policy pronounced in the Resolution is the traditional American policy. To be sure, the President has appointed the American half of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry into the Palestine problem, but why should not the American representatives on the Committee have the benefit of knowing what the United States Congress thinks of the problem? There is no point in having America share in the responsibility for Palestine if American opinion is to be ignored and American sentiment flouted.

The truth is, however, that Mr. Connally was right in believing that the passage of the Resolution must prove embarrassing to President Truman. The embarrassment consists in the evidence its passage would afford that Congress does not believe the libel against the Zionist movement to which President Truman lends credence in order to justify his repudiation of his former favorable attitude. The explanation of his recantation was contained in a letter to J. David

Stern, publisher of the *Philadelphia Record*. In that letter, Truman explained that, while he still favors large-scale emigration of European Jews to Palestine, he now opposes the establishment of any sovereign nation based on religion, race or creed. To assume that, in a Jewish commonwealth, citizenship would be any more based on religion, race or creed than in a British, French, or American commonwealth is to assume a demonstrable falsehood. The American Jewish Conference has nailed this lie by quoting from the resolution of the World Zionist Conference held in London last August. The resolution reads: "The Jewish State will be based upon full equality of rights of all inhabitants without distinction of religion or race in the political, civic, religious and national domains, and without domination or subjection. . . . The Arabic language and Arab schools will enjoy all state rights."

We do not profess to know why the President lent himself to spreading the smear against Zionism and the Jewish people. We prefer to think that he was duped rather than that he deliberately gave his name to support the libel. We are ashamed at the thought that fellow-Jews like Rosenwald and other members of the American Council for Judaism, have helped to fasten this libel on our people and its just cause. But the wording of the Palestine Resolution does not give our disloyal Jews or President Truman a leg to stand on. Senators Wagner and Taft, co-sponsors of the Resolution in the Senate, have also refuted the libel in an emphatic letter to the President.

The approval of the Resolution by the Zionist Emergency Council can leave no doubt in the mind of any honest person as to Zionist intentions, since what the Resolution calls for is that Jews, after having been given free access to Palestine and every opportunity to expand its absorptive capacity, shall proceed with the upbuilding of the country "as a democratic commonwealth in which all men, regardless of race or creed shall have equal rights." Continued opposition by the President or the State Department to a resolution so worded would be proof positive that they yielded ground to Great Britain not because of considerations of justice or democracy, but because of other considerations which they fear to present to the judgment of American and British public opinion. And they have good grounds for that fear, since the real reasons for their action are not good to look at and smell of oil and economic imperialism.

It is in deference to interests, not to principles, that Great Britain has committed its breach of trust in unilaterally abrogating its covenant with the Jewish people. And those interests are not the interests of the Jews, nor the interests of the Arabs, nor the interests of the people of Great Britain and the United States. There would be no need for all the pious cant with which the true motives are concealed, if the genuine interests of the American and British people were involved. There is no need of an Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry into the Palestine problem—the facts and relevant data are easily accessible and a matter of common knowledge — but there is need for a searching Anglo-American inquiry to find out what private interests have put pressure on the British Foreign Office and our Department of State and have corrupted their integrity of purpose with reference to Palestine and the Jewish problem.

WHICH WAY ARGENTINA?

WITH the attention and energies of American Jewry absorbed both by the enormous problem of rehabilitating the remnant of

European Jewry and by the Palestine crisis, scant notice has been taken of the situation now developing in Argentina. When headlines blare the "news" of the annihilation of six millions, as revealed by Nazi documents at the Nuremberg trial, the current story of an old-fashioned pogrom in Buenos Aires fails to create a stir. For all its sadly familiar character, the recent anti-Jewish attack must be recognized as something more than a mere spontaneous outbreak of Jew hatred. It must be identified as a way-station in the march of a gang of determined fascists bent on gaining control of the Argentine government.

The roots of the trouble go back to the period of Nazi ascendancy when Argentina, under the thin mask of neutrality, backed the Nazis to win, just as, some years before, Argentina had quite openly supported Franco's thrust for power. A clique of army officers, the notorious "Colonels' Club" organized by Juan Peron, found its inspiration in Nazi philosophy and its guide in Nazi strategy. More assiduous students, Hitler and his associates could never have desired. From 1942 to the present date, Peron and his cohorts, in their quest for power, have followed the Nazi pattern in every detail. Their initial weapon is a demagoguery, uninhibited by reason or logical consistency. The familiar hodge-podge of "Nationalism and Socialism a bulwark against Communism," higher wages, lower prices and greater profits—in a word, all things to all men—is ostensibly the platform on which Peron is running for the office of presidency.

Good fascists, however, do not rely on words alone. They are the original worshipers of the violent deed—such action, for example, as shooting from behind cover into unarmed crowds. As usual in the Nazi scheme of aggression, the spark to set off all this explosive violence is anti-Semitism. Local students of Jewish affairs in Argentina are authority for the statement that, prior to Peron's emergence on the political scene, there was no conspicuous anti-Semitism. With Peron there began to appear an anti-Semitic press and literature. During his periods of power, more numerous than lasting, official government support has generously been given to all kinds of anti-Semitic tactics. When Peronists recently invaded the Jewish quarter of Buenos Aires to smash windows and heads and to loot everything within reach, the police stood by passively. They moved in only when a group of young Jews put up a spirited defense, and then they arrested the victims of the attack! Familiar? Of course. It is Germany, 1934 or 1935 all over again. Now Peron is running for office in a national election to be held in February. Such reliable observers as Ray Joseph insist that Peron intends to take office, "win, lose or draw," at the election. As a good fascist, he knows that there are ways.

One of the most distressing aspects of the whole situation is the peculiar position into which our own State Department has been jockeyed. For all the known sympathy of the Argentine government with the Nazis and its outright support of them, Argentina has been coddled by the State Department. Mr. Nelson Rockefeller's office spread the Good Neighbor policy while the fascist Argentinians laughed up their sleeves. When Nazi fortunes took an unfavorable turn, Peron, then in power, was handed a curt ultimatum by our Government. Of course, the Colonel could do nothing but knuckle under, and, formally at least, break relations wtih Germany. Then came the San Francisco Conference. For a while it looked as if Argentina's desire for admission to membership in the United Nations Organization had struck a snag. Liberal

forces in America organized a campaign against her admission. More significantly, Russia opposed calling her into the family of nations. At the last moment, Mr. Stettinius, then Secretary of State, saved the situation for Argentina by a fervent plea and some desperate maneuvers. Alas, that Mr. Stettinius' efforts were not lent to a worthier cause! Admission into UNO has apparently failed to make the slightest change in the Fascist mentality of Peron and his clique. We prefer the forthrightness of Mr. Spruille Braden, our recent Ambassador to Argentina, who, just before his departure from that country, threw diplomatic circumlocution to the winds and told the local fascists in strong language what was due them.

There is a crucial point at which our treatment of Argentina must cease to run parallel to our treatment of Germany before the war. At that time all appeals to the democracies to make representations to Germany on the Nazi treatment of minorities met with the reply: "This is an internal matter of the German government." Even such formal, stupid legalism cannot now be invoked. The treatment of minorities is no longer a purely internal matter. Under the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations Organization, present or anticipated, in accordance with the provision for a Declaration of Human Rights, Argentina can, as soon as UNO begins to function, be cited for violation of that Charter. Whatever the technicalities involved, neither our own government nor the UNO can take refuge behind a legal formula for failure to act. The theory expressed by this formula has long since been exploded and is morally indefensible. We shall soon have in the UNO an address to which we can apply for redress. In such a move, our government should have the the indorsement and support of all liberal American forces. We paid too much to destroy fascism abroad for us now to look on unmoved at its growth in one of our "Good Neighbors."

A MILESTONE IN JEWISH RELIGIOUS PROGRESS

THE Hebrew Union College has just completed seventy years of service to American Jewry. Its directors, faculty and alumni deserve a hearty *mazzal tov,* not merely for the fact that the college has been sustained in strength for seventy years, but also because it has, as the major fountainhead of Reform Judaism in America, contributed to one of the valiant efforts to adjust Judaism to modern life. Reform was the first movement in modern Judaism to attempt to reckon with the social, cultural and intellectual challenge of the Emancipation. Like all pioneers, the leaders of early Reform made mistakes, due to their unfamiliarity with the new territory they were exploring. But, in spite of certain misjudgments concerning the nature of the problem of Jewish adjustment in a democracy like America, they contributed significantly to the whole conception of adjustment and change. They made Judaism evolve *consciously.*

In recent years, the Reform movement has maintained its tradition of change; unlike the sons and daughters of certain revolutions, the leaders of Reform insist that one change is not enough. In 1937, the Columbus convention adopted a set of principles which supplanted the old Pittsburgh platform of 1885, resulting in a more positive attitude toward Palestine, and a more sympathetic attitude toward some of the folk aspects of Judaism.

Perhaps the most significant development took place on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary celebration, when plans were announced for the expansion

of the work of the college beyond the training of rabbis. The directors and faculty have apparently come to the realization that Judaism is more than a matter of theology, that it includes interests and activities besides worship and ritual. They are beginning to see Judaism as the product of a *people,* which expresses itself through its social structure, its culture, its ethics, as well as through its religion. To that extent, the expansion of the college is a recognition of the truth which we have been attempting to expound, that Judaism is a dynamic religious civilization.

We, therefore, have reason to congratulate American Jewry as well as the Hebrew Union College on this anniversary, for we regard the acknowledgment of the civilizational character of Judaism as good reason to rejoice. One of the reasons Judaism has been taking root so slowly in America has been the attempt to fit Judaism into the Procrustean bed of a "religious denomination," to make of it merely a "faith," and not permit it to flourish as a way of life, as a cultural pattern, as the product of a total civilization. Now that it is clear that Judaism requires not only rabbis, but social workers, administrators, educators, journalists, musicians, artists and architects, scholars and statesmen, provision will be made for developing men and women who will practice these professions and infuse new life into American Israel.

The expansion planned by the Hebrew Union College is not an isolated instance. The Jewish Theological Seminary has for many months been exploring the possibilities of becoming a University of Judaism, to encompass the variety of interests which comprise the totality of Jewish life. The Isaac Elchanan Yeshivah has recently been granted a new charter, entitling its faculty to award higher degrees and to institute new departments. We hail these developments with profound gratitude, for they reveal how inescapably true is our philosophy and program of Judaism. We have repeatedly asserted that Jews can have no Jewish religion in common unless they have other things in common besides religion; we have repeatedly urged the legitimatizing of the so-called "secular" interests in Jewish life, by making them, equally with the "religious" interests, the concern of the religious leaders, and thus helping to infuse into the "secular" interests the true spirit of faith and piety.

The present tendency toward viewing Judaism as a civilization will ultimately mitigate, and perhaps eliminate altogether, the denominationalism which has troubled Israel during the past half-century. For the idea of Judaism as a civilization encourages diversity, which is vital to growth, but discourages denominationalism, which is a deterrent. Denominationalism fragmentizes; diversity fructifies. The significant difference lies in the fact that, when there is unity within diversity, there is maximum cooperation on those matters which all have in common, with freedom to deviate on those matters where disagreement exists; when there is denominationalism, there is the tendency to carry the differences right down the line, creating factionalism even in those areas where it is both unnecessary and harmful.

It is much too soon to expect that in Jewish life denominationalism will quickly disappear. For two generations, the three major groups, Orthodox, Conservative and Reform, have been functioning, each with its set of rabbinical schools, brotherhoods and young peoples' organizations. But now that the various denominations have become keenly aware of the larger implications of Jewish life and are beginning to broaden their own conceptions of Judaism, there is reason

to hope that American Jewry is on the road to a consolidation of its forces, to a full understanding of the problems and responsibilities which all must share. May the time not be distant when all American Jews will be spiritually mature enough to recognize that they must cooperate on all those enterprises which affect the entire people, so that they may be free to express themselves diversely in those areas in which there are legitimate reasons for diversity.

REALITIES AND VALUES

A JEWISH REFUGEE FROM persecution came to America and, when we entered the war, enlisted in our army. He was among our troops that invaded Germany. From the time he set foot on German soil, he could not be persuaded to use soap. His comrades thought him crazy when, in explanation of his behavior, he said that the soap might have come from the body of his grandmother. But — in the town of Brashovi, near Transylvania, there recently occurred one of the grimmest episodes in the macabre tale of Nazi sadism and degeneracy. It was a funeral service held over cases labeled "pure Jewish soap." The *Germans* may well stop washing now. Theirs is a stain no soap can remove.

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IN THE COURSE OF SIX months after their "liberation" by the victorious American and allied armies, 30,000 Jewish inmates of Displaced Persons camps perished from disease and malnutrition in the American zone alone —so the Jewish Central Committee of Munich charges, and they should know. But let not the surviving inmates murmur. Let them be patient. In only four more months the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry *may* render a report. And by that time, with the help of winter and plague, no doubt most of these D.P.s will have found peace in *Gan Eden*, and possibly some of the rest may eventually find a haven on this earth in some promised land or other. But let them not meanwhile push "too much to the head of the queue" and — please, oh please! — if they should join the 30,000 of their colleagues who have gone before, let not their ghosts haunt the consciences of the estimable gentlemen and statesmen who, by delaying the solution of the Jewish problem, have signed their death warrant.

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TALKING OF CONSCIENCES, WE are happy to record a word of explanation from the British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin. He has recently been criticized for having omitted in his address to Parliament on the Palestine problem, all reference to the promise of a "national home for the Jewish people." He spoke only of the promise of a "Jewish home." Mr. S. S. Silverman, a Laborite Member of Parliament, recently called his attention to this unfortunate omission. Bevin's letter in reply, said: "I write to assure you that the phrase 'Jewish home', which I used in the House of Commons on November 13, was intended to be understood as an abbreviation of the phrase, 'national home for the Jewish people,' which appears in the Balfour Declaration and in the preamble of the Mandate for Palestine. His Majesty's Government have no intention of evading their obligations under these instruments. . . ." Too bad that ungenerous souls may suspect that this explanation was a result of the rising tide of indignation which followed the report of his speech in Parliament. Some of them may even think that Bevin was playing the lawyer's trick of saying to the jury words that he knew the Court would strike from the record, but that would influence the jury nevertheless. However, the Foreign Secretary can still

lear himself of that suspicion. He can till repudiate the White Paper and proceed to implement the Palestine Mandate which he now admits demands "facilitating the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people."

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In the debate in the House of Lords on Great Britain's Palestine policy, the demand for the abrogation of the White Paper and the mass-colonization of Palestine by Jews received strong support from Viscount Herbert Samuel, the first British High Commissioner of Palestine. Viscount Samuel is not a Zionist and opposes the promise of a Jewish state in Palestine. He declared, accurately enough, that "the Balfour Declaration did not promise a Jewish state, but an opportunity to create conditions under which, in the course of time, it might be possible to establish a Jewish state." He maintains, however, that the White Paper policy is in direct contravention of the intention of the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate. It is interesting to note that, although, during his administration as High Commissioner, Transjordan was separated from Palestine, he now advocates the opening of that region to Jewish settlement. We welcome his support. If only Great Britain would facilitate "conditions under which . . . it would be possible to establish a Jewish state," the Jewish people would soon enough establish it.

▼

James McDonald is one member of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry for Palestine, of whom we can be sure, at least, that he understands the meaning of Judaism. Indeed, he seems to understand it better than many Jews. Addressing a luncheon of the National Women's League of the United Synagogue of America, he took to task those leaders of American Judaism, many of whom are also leaders in business and finance, who nevertheless "live in a world of illusion" as far as their Judaism is concerned. "This type of leader," he said, "has an unrealistic and narrow conception of Judaism. To stand up and argue that Judaism is merely a matter of religion is to ignore and misconstrue the entire history of Judaism. Similarly, some Zionists, those who would make of Judaism a form of nationalism and nothing more, also interpret it narrowly and restrictively." But if Judaism is not merely a religion nor merely a form of nationalism, what is it? Answer: It is what the Reconstructionist Platform calls it, "the evolving religious civilization of the Jewish people." We imagine that Mr. McDonald would accept that definition, and it should help him in performing his duties on the Commisison of Inquiry.

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The Yiddish Scientific Institute (Yivo) has just announced an essay contest among Jewish men and women in the armed forces and Jewish veterans. The subject for the contestants is: "My Experiences and Observations as a Jew in World War II." In explaining the purpose of the contest, Yivo's news release says very truly: "These personal experiences and reflections, the new outlooks on Jews and Judaism are, in a sense guideposts to the future of American Jewry and thus of significance to Jews throughout the world. The sum total of these experiences, therefore, has enormous sociological and historic value." In order that the contest should yield this value, Yivo asks that each essay submitted should include (1) a short biographical sketch of the author, (2) a factual description of all that the writer observed or learned from direct and reliable witnesses, (3) a description of the writer's own feelings and thoughts evoked

(*Continued on Page* 24)

The Test of Democracy

By DAVID POLISH

PALESTINE is the test of democracy. Twenty million soldiers, men, women, and children, died in the name of democracy. Cities were wiped out in a fight to save democracy. All over the world, people believed that this was it—the war to preserve democracy. The common man believed in it. The little people believed in it. They stood silent and without tears over their ruined houses and the graves of their sons and the crippled limbs of their little ones because they believed in it. Now that peace has been proclaimed, the little people come to put in their claim for a share of that democracy for which they suffered without end. It is time to pay off. The time is now. Not some distant tomorrow when pledges will become vague and memories become cloudy.

Palestine—The Test of International Honesty

Now is the time when we will see what the words "liberty" and "freedom" are worth. They were worth a great deal in 1940 when Britain was being blitzed. They were worth a great deal in 1942 when Rommel was driving to Suez. They were worth a great deal in 1944 when V-bombs were falling on London. What are they worth now, in 1945? The Jews have come to ask that a pledge be made good. They do not rely on the pledge alone. They have reenforced it with six million of their dead. They have reenforced it with the thousands of their men who drove the Nazis back from El Alamein, while in the bars at Alexandria Arab cutthroats were toasting Hitler's impending victory. They have reenforced it with their slain brothers of the Polish underground, of the French Maquis, of the Jewish Brigade. They have reenforced it with a war which Hitler waged against them from 1930 on, a war which was a warning to the world of things to come. Now it remains to be seen whether the democratic world means to honor its pledge or to welch on it. Upon this decision rests the verdict of millions of the little people, a verdict which will determine whether freedom has been betrayed once more, whether democracy has been made a mockery by the very men who proclaimed a holy war in its name.

Palestine is the test of democracy. For the fate of Palestine and of Europe's Jews will be a prophecy of the fate of the world. Should Jewry be betrayed in 1945, humanity will be betrayed a decade later. Should this small land fall victim to power politics today, large and powerful lands will be torn from end to end by power politics tomorrow. This is no idle forecast. In 1933, the Jews of the world pleaded with the nations to see in the persecution of our people a threat to the peace of the entire globe. The attack on the Jew was like a foul disease which fastens on a finger-tip and soon covers the whole body. Few listened. The grim prophecy came true.

Palestine—The Test of World Peace

This is the test not only of international honesty. It is the test of whether our children are to go forward into World War III. If great powers cannot keep one pledge, they will dishonor other pledges too. If they mean to throw Palestine to the forces of appeasement and to the oil interests, they will sacrifice other nations and other peoples for their own purposes all over again. The heartbreaking era of

re-war times will start all over again. reachery will follow upon treachery. lations will again tremble as their leadrs vainly try to head off what they themlves precipitated. War will come again, nd humanity will go into caves and oles to escape the wrath that will level ne world. And as surely as one war came ecause politicians held little and helpss people in contempt, another will ome if politicians play fast and loose ith the lives of shattered people whose ery death-rattles can be heard in the oncentration camps. Humanity has eached the point of desperation. It could ot stand another desecration of liberty. t could not bear it and it would not and for it if glowing promises were to e mocked and broken again.

he Guilt of the ritish Government

The British government collaborated ith fascism before 1939 and disaster ame. The British government once more ollaborates with fascism, Arab fascism, il fascism. The British think that this ime they will succeed in keeping fascism he junior partner of the firm, in keeping subdued and tractable. This will never e. How many Coventries does England eed to learn this? The democracies permitted Hitler to wax strong and they adranced him as the leader of a legitimate ational movement. We say to Attlee and Bevin and their government — what difference does it make whether you do usiness with Hitler dressed in a trench oat or with Hitler dressed in flowing obes? We say to Attlee and Bevin and o Standard Oil—blood is thicker than il, and the maddening clamor of our rothers for rescue will not give way to our callous demands for pipelines.

We say to the British government—the lood of a million and a quarter Jews be on your hands if you do not clear the way to Palestine for them. The Nazis put thousands of them in concentration camps and you keep them there. The Nazis forced them to flee Europe on the Patria and the Struma and you let them drown on the way to Palestine. Should you let them perish, you will be accessories to their deaths. When your cities were on fire from Nazi bombs, when your children lay pinned beneath the debris of their homes, you called for help and it came without stint. You cried, "Give us the tools and we will finish the job." Now we say to you: "Give us the key to Palestine and we will finish the job too. Was your sorrow more grievous because you were Englishmen? Is our sorrow less grievous because we are Jews?"

We have had our fill of your phony excuses. You have told us that the land is too small to contain our people. But they came and made ample room. You have told us that the land is barren. We made it fertile. You have told us to wait. We have waited. You have told us everything except that you do not want us in Palestine.

You are lovers of the Bible and you take pride in your religiosity. Then you will remember the text: "When I was hungry, you gave me nothing to eat. When I was thirsty, you gave me nothing to drink. When I was a stranger, you did not invite me home. When I had no clothes, you did not supply me. When I was sick and in prison, you did not look after me."

You pride yourselves in your Shakespeare. Then you remember what he said when King Lear was driven into the storm by his treacherous daughter: "If wolves had at thy gate howled that stern time, thou shouldst have said, 'Good porter, turn the key.'"

A people that has lived in hell will not

be turned back from Palestine by pieces of White Paper. Laws conceived in injustice will not hold back the damned. Theirs is but one objective. We shall not be silent and we shall not rest until it is fulfilled—the restoration of these people to the one place on earth where they are wanted, Palestine, the land of Israel.

"Please, Sir!"

By BERTRAM ROSENBERG

LONG after Hitler's death, his anti-Semitic ravings against the Jews will have their effect. I do not want to discuss to what extent their impression will be retained in the Gentile mind, nor to what degree this retention will influence our neighborly relations. I am interested in its present effect, in the very visible manner in which it has already dominated the actions of some of our Jewish-American youth. I speak from Army camp experience.

American Jewry Developing Inferiority Complex

As a theorem, still wanting tomorrow's proof, but founded on today's experience, I maintain that the manner and content of Jewish expressions, the militancy and openness in the choosing of sides for American Democracy in elections, in exchanges of public opinion, in the day by day rubbing of Jew aganist Gentile in commercial undertakings, and in the very act of discourse, there is a lowering of Jewish assertiveness, a suppliancy of thought-exchange, a settling down into the background, indeed an acceptance of a secondary citizenship, and a feeling of inferioirty. This, "Hitler's gang" has accomplished in America.

As American Jews, we have seldom been subjected to physical violence. Incidents in Boston, New York and other places are exceptions. Generally, our only casualties have been psychic wounds. This has led to an attitude of kow-towing. I need but quote Dr. Hershel Meyer in his "Nationalism and Jewish Self-Hatred," in *Medical Leaves Journal,* Vol. 3, and 4:

"We know that a powerful feeling of inferiority may either result in a display of over-aggressiveness, or through timidity, meekness or making oneself inconspicuous.

"It is no exaggeration to state that the feeling of guilt, inferiority and insecurity among Jews is highly hypertrophied. When any conscious organism (and the Jewish people may historically be considered as such) experiences insult after insult, injury after injury, is despised, ridiculed, shamed, discriminated against and tortured without the faintest possibility of revenge or retaliation, it is entitled to suffer from some form of acute inferiority.

"Many German Jews now declare that they have learned from their misfortune to avoid, in the future, being in the public eye. They state that their ambition and talent were superfluous and that they will learn to be satisfied with less."

The Jewish-American youth of this generation had largely removed this inferiority stain from their consciousness this yellow badge of the mind. Although knowing that their fathers had been quite definitely stamped with it, they had through the years begun to follow their personal inclinations in a more normal forthright and American fashion. But the normal procedure, in performing the duties of American citizenship, in di

arging the responsibilities of decent anhood without cringing, has been ocked in many instances. This blockage s resulted from the repeated dinning in e ear and flashing before the eye by azi propaganda of the word, Jew . . . w . . . Jew . . . always disparagingly.

I might say that American non-Jews ave in certain circles arisen to the chalnge. Books have been written to show aat Jews are human beings. Jews, as hakespeare intimated (during his momenary lapse from hatred of Israel), have ertain qualities that one expects from the igher mammals. Strange world where a ertain group of people need to explain ts belonging to *homo sapiens!* The amiliar quotation from Shylock's speech n the "Merchant of Venice," illustrates his point. Shylock is permitted to cry out: "I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimenions, senses, affections, passions? Fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge?"

The writers of books in defense of the Jews have felt that a flow of favorable reports upon Jewry would be needed to counter the stream of anti-Semitic propaganda and encourage a wholesome view of the Jew in American life.

The Jew as Portrayed on Stage and Screen

Motion-picture producers have, on rare occasions, endeavored to give the Jew a character of unbelievable goodness and humaneness. But never have they portrayed the Jew as a man of courage, of physical stamina and daring in battle. Because these producers, being Jewish themselves, suffer from the same psychosis and are similarly affected by the same beatings from Hitleristic propaganda, Jews must apparently be forever portrayed on the screen as inconsequential, obsequiously-kind characters, never as people with "blood and guts," with audacity, with a good right hook.

In this connection, it may be pointed out that the Jewish theatre could support, with a powerful message, the upbuilding of a virile Jewish-American community. It could present examples of brave Jews who built and fought in the wilderness, who went back to the soil of their Jewish National Homeland, and hewed its stones, dug into its earth, and at the same time, ploughed a deep furrow in their own souls and turned up a topsoil of Maccabbean courage. The old hackneyed theatrical themes for which the Jewish stage is notorious, should be eradicated. Enough, we say, of the tears of yesterday, of silly familial relationships, of episodes that depict the Jew as a humble mouse-like creature, who is pushed about and forced into all sorts of straits without determining for himself where he is going. The Jewish theatre must have the boldness to portray the Jew with a strong character, wtih muscle and brawn, and, figuratively if not literally, with a rifle on his shoulder. Let the theatre tell the amazing story of the building of our Jewish National Homeland. This episode in modern Jewish history undoubtedly affords one of the finest examples of Jews whose labors have achieved the impossible with a reluctant soil, who watched and defended the fruits of their toil, with guns, and who are engaged in brave experiments with new forms of social living.

Some Incidents of Jewish Inferiority Complex Among Servicemen

I well remember several incidents in

camp, that showed Jewish-American youth crawling like worms.

One day, after a very impressive Chapel service, during which the Chaplain read of the heroes of the Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto, and with the tune of the Young Judaean version of the Adon Olam, ringing and singing in our ears, we made our way back to our barracks. There my friend found an old harmonica and commenced "to give out," with all the Palestinian chants he and I knew—*Anu Banu Artzah, Hinneh Mah Tov, Karamambuli.* It was not more than three songs and two bars of *Yerushalayim* later, when the Section Chief, a Jewish lad, cautioned us to be quiet.

Revolt flared within us, and we continued. Again the Section Chief, emerged from his shell and cautioned, "What do you guys want to prove? That this is a Jewish war?" We were stunned, tongue-tied. My friend could only blurt out a "What-the-hell!" when the Section Chief continued: "Listen, cut it out, the place for that sort of stuff is in the synagogue. There is no sense advertising you're Jewish."

It took more than four of us to stop the fight that ensued.

The following happened on the morning when we were to attend Rosh Hashanah services at the Chapel. According to the Chaplain's directive, our First Sergeant was to permit us to attend, unless, of course, "Service to duty interfered." That morning, our training schedule was suspended by the Commanding Officer to allow us an opportunity to attend services. So, at the appropriate hour, ten of us lined up in formation, in our best bib, to march over to the Chapel. Our First Sergeant faced us.

"What the devil are you guys doing in your O.D.'s?"

"Sergeant," a voice said, "we are ready to go to Chapel services since the training schedule has been suspended. It is our custom to prepare ourselves adequately in the presence of our Lord."

"Is zat so," was the vituperative reply. "And who gave you permission to speak? Now listen, get back into your fatigue clothes and police-up this area. When I come back and see how you have done, I'll dismiss you. . . ."

The hands of the clock moved on and already the hour for Services had passed. One of the boys hastened over to the CO's office. There he told our tale and was given permission by the officer in charge to attend the services.

In the Chapel, I remember observing that it was thrilling to watch several hundred men receiving their Lord in the Chapel. The uniforms made a picturesque display with here and there a *talit,* like a sea of green with white-caps, like Kinnereth in Palestine. Here and there one could see the characteristic swaying to and fro, to and fro, and one felt that all were spiritually side-by-side, shoulder-to-shoulder with their loved ones at home.

After the services, we went outside. Suddenly, I heard a commotion. The Jewish boys from our company were all gathered about the young lad who had secured for us the right to attend the services. I heard: "What do you mean by going to see the CO?"

"Well," the young lad was saying, "wasn't it the CO's order to permit us to attend services? Didn't the Chaplain say that 'if ever our rights were denied.' . . . ?"

"Listen," was the interruption, almost a babel of voices, "when we want your aid we'll ask for it. Now we are in dutch with the First Sergeant."

"But," the young lad defended himself, "it was our right."

Again interruption, "Rights, shmights,

ember we're Jews and have to watch step. We must be the first to obey orders, and the last to ask for exitions. . . ."

One of the patients in the ward was vish. His particular case, one of exme nervousness did not call for a long iod of observation and examination. was an easy case to diagnose. Yet this was held for what seemed to him an ceptionally long time without due ise. As I walked over to him, he drew into a corner and confidently said: "I had a talk with the Lieutenant tterday."

"Yes?" I nodded.

"You know, he's Jewish," he whispered.

"Yes."

"Well, I found that out before I went see him. . . ."

"So, what?" I interrupted.

He continued, "Well, I walked into his ice and sat down. During the interange of talk I pulled a 'My nervouss is an *alte meshugas*. He seemed nned and quickly said, 'When you adess me, soldier, say sir, and speak nglish.' By this time, I was fed up with s double-talk and evasions and I was ginning to understand why he had deyed taking action on me, so I blurted, ieutenant, I've heard that the reason u delay decisions on all cases is that u feel that a Jewish doctor must step er cautiously, be watchful for all posibilities, like a man with a hundred eyes. ell, sir, I'll be damned if I'll suffer re any longer merely because you rese to act, to discharge your duties ur your own convictions, without waitg for every Tom, Dick and Harry to ree with you. I'm fed up and I'm gog to see the Major about my disposion.' Believe me, I was mad. Well, today leave. You know, Bert, I've never been o good a Jew, but I've never felt ashamed or inferior because I was one."

Then he said laughingly, "That Jewish psychiatrist needs a psychiatric examination."

The Danger of the "Please, Sir" Attitude

These three incidents all have one thing in common, that is they illustrate the fear of young American Jews to follow their natural inclinations lest their actions attract the attention of the non-Jew. Their demeanor is guided by the thought, "Hitler has done enough to put us Jews under the spotlight, why should I help him do it?" or perhaps, "We, Jews, are walking on thin ice, we must tread lightly." They feel that the blaring of the Nazi doctrines, for almost eleven years, has penetrated deeply enough into certain American minds to create distrust. After all, they reason, where there is smoke, there is fire.

So, the tendency today, and tomorrow may be "Please, sir." I pray this prophecy may not prove true, because American democracy would be the loser; every fighter for truth, for righteousness, for freedom of thought would have lost an ally, and the Beasts of Berlin, would have triumphed.

Since the incidents mentioned occurred, Hitler has been defeated and is no longer important, but the inroads of his anti-Jewish teachings must not be permitted to exercise a subsconscious power over the Jewish-American mind. For if we succumb and adopt a subdued, subservient, hush-hush, "Please, sir," attitude in reference to all policies, national, state, city and local, we are abetting the forces of Hitlerism. We ourselves, nobody else, can win this war in our own souls; no committee, no rally, no moneys, but we ourselves. We alone are in the ring, shadow-boxing with ourselves.

Indeed the "Please, Sir!" attitude aids the enemy. It plays in with his scheme to

create distrust among members of one group in the nation toward other groups, to build up mutual resentments that rest on a tissue of lies. It accomplishes the purposes of the millions of copies of scurrilous doggerel, sometimes profane, that have been circulated in order to create these schisms among us.

This article may well conclude with a saying of Theodor Herzl, founder of modern Political Zionism, written for another world, and another age, but applicable even today:

"The present condition of the Jews can lead in two directions: The first, is the dumb endurance of humiliation, and need. We have chosen the second way; we wish to lift ourselves to a higher level of morality, work for the common weal, build new roads for the intercommunications of mankind, break a new path for social justice."

Are the Jews a Chosen People?*

By BERNARD J. BAMBERGER

THE great services rendered to American Judaism by Dr. Mordecai M. Kaplan have been made all the plainer of late, by the grotesque episodes of excommunication and book burning. Even those who do not agree with his conclusions — and the present writer is one such — must confess their debt to him for the intellectual vigor, honesty, and courage with which he has examined fundamental problems of Jewish thought and faith. He has never ceased to strive for clarity of thinking, which he has matched with forthright clarity of speech.

These traits are manifest in his recent public utterance, "Shall We Retain the Doctrine of Israel as the Chosen People?" (*The Reconstructionist,* February 23, 1945), in which he considers the belief in the election of Israel, finds it unsatisfactory, and proposes as a substitute the doctrine of "vocation." To his great credit, Dr. Kaplan disregards altogether the argument that the "chosen people" idea causes misunderstanding on the part of non-Jews. His basic objection is that the idea is intellectually untenable, because it belongs to a *Weltanschauung* long since outmoded. Moreover, he adds the retention of such a view, which cannot be rationally defended, is spiritually dangerous to the Jew.

The Chosen People Idea in Jewish History

I am extremely grateful for the breadth of outlook displayed by the editors of *The Reconstructionist* in giving me this opportunity to reply to Dr. Kaplan's essay. Let me begin with a brief historical comment. Inherent in the doctrine of the election of Israel are positive religious values which Dr. Kaplan seems to underestimate. If the belief expresses a certain national pride, or at least a sense of national privilege, it carries with it also a sense of consecration and responsibility. Of this fact the Bible provides abundant evidence. Dr. Kaplan indeed quotes the great warning of Amos, that just because of Israel's nearness to God, Jews will be held the more strictly accountable for their sins. But though this passage denies that Israel is "chosen" in the sense that the Jews are special favorites, it affirms nonetheless that Israel stands in

* A reply to this article will appear in an early issue of *The Reconsrtuctionist.*

pecial relationship to God—and, amaz-ly enough, this affirmation comes from same prophet who said: "Are ye not co Me as the Ethiopians, O children Israel?" Paradoxically, the doctrine election is not particularistic—but the erse.

Dr. Kaplan refers regretfully to the rds in the *Alenu* prayer, extolling God "not having made us like other peo-es." It is indeed a grating passage; yet is followed immediately by the sub-ne vision of the time when all men shall ve God in a single consecrated fellow-ip! Those sections in the latter part Isaiah which represent Israel as the rvant of the Lord, charged with a ission to all humanity, are not to be dis-issed because they are exceptional. They represent a specially high spiritual vel — but not too high to have erted a profound influence on Jew-h thought. This same outlook is und in a number of Psalms, and is choed in the Pentateuch. In later Jew-h literature, and more important—as we all see—in later Jewish life, the belief the mission proved to be marvelously uitful.

he Chosen People Idea and the ewish Mission

But this historical aspect—though fas-inating—is not our chief concern. How-ver fruitful a certain concept may have een in the past, we are not thereby ound to retain it. We should examine carefully and reverently; but we can ccept only what seems to us true and ight.

Obviously, no one who rejects the tra-itional view of revelation can hold the loctrine of election in its primitive form —according to which God literally spoke o Abraham and Moses, and formally oncluded a bilateral covenant with Israel hrough the agency of the latter. Equally ound is Dr. Kaplan's opposition to the idea that the Jewish people possess some sort of inherited spiritual superiority—and it is ironic that Geiger and Kohler, with all their emphasis on universalism, should have fallen into such a dangerously careless way of thinking. Nevertheless, much remains valid, to my mind, in the doctrines of election and mission.

They may have their germ in the sense of nearness to the national deity which was common among most ancient peoples. But these concepts as we know them arose out of a unique situation. Israel came to believe that the God whom they worshiped was not only *their God,* not just the mightiest or the best God, but the one and only God of all mankind. They came to regard their religion, not merely as the right religion for *them,* but as the one true religion, which all men must one day accept. The doctrine of the election and mission of Israel arose from the tension between the belief that God is the God of humanity and the realistic fact that He was recognized only by Israel. This doctrine, as previously remarked, is not the product of Jewish tribalism and particularism, but of Jewish universalism!

This universalism may be studied with interest and profit in post-Exilic literature —but more plainly and profitably in post-Exilic history. A missionary movement of unprecedented character and enormous success arose. The rebirth of national spirit under the Maccabees, surprisingly enough, stimulated this missionary effort. So far as we know, it was not a planned, organized undertaking; it was a spontaneous movement, rooted in the conviction that Judaism was for all God's children. This missionary aim was never voluntarily abandoned by Israel. It was gradually thwarted by the external pressure of Christian and Moslem governments; but as late as the eighth century, it achieved the conversion of the Chazars.

If few Jews today desire proselytes, it is because their missionary zeal, so long suppressed, has become atrophied.

Those who today believe in the election of Israel are those who regard Judaism as a universal religion, as *the* universal religion, with a message for all men. In so believing, they do not deny all truth and value to other faiths. The leaders of the ancient Jewish missionary movement did not declare that only the circumcised could be saved. That the righteous among the Gentiles have a share in the world to come was affirmed by R. Joshua, who was particularly interested in proselytes, and echoed by Maimonides, who shared the same interest. Those likewise who today regard Judaism as primarily a universal religion believe that adherents of that religion occupy a special position and have a special obligation with respect to the rest of mankind. A different view is naturally taken by those who regard Judaism as one of the elements (even though the predominant element) in the national culture of the Jews. For such, the Jewish religion is the form of religious expression suitable for the Jewish nation, as Calvinism is for the Scotch or Hinduism for the Hindus.

The issue here is not that of Jewish nationalism. The Pharisees lived a national Jewish life in Palestine; but they regarded as a Jew anyone who adopted the Jewish religion, regardless of his ethnic and political affiliations. We are not now concerned with that tiresome question: how are the Jewish people to be classified? but with a question less often raised: how is Judaism to be classified? Is it a department of the Jewish national culture, or is it the message of God to mankind as revealed (by the mystery of Providence) through Israel?

Related to this is another question: how do we classify religion? Is it one of the elements of human culture — coordinate with art, literature, and law—or is it the supreme value in human life? Here again the basic difference between the religionist and the Reconstructionist — however important the place which the latter assigns to religion within the scheme of Judaism as a civilization—is manifest.

Facts Bearing Out the Chosen People Idea

And now, putting aside both mystical faith and intellectual presuppositions, let us contemplate a few facts:

1. Religion came to the western world, and to a great part of the eastern world, through Israel. We did not do it all; non-Jews made significant contributions, by which we in turn profited. But ethical monotheism, the Bible, prophetic morality, the synagogue and its variant forms—the church and the mosque—Jesus and Paul, the inspiration of Mohammed — all these were Israel's contribution. The only comparable influence of a small people in the world, by general consent, is that of Greece.

2. The Jewish people have continued (as the Greeks have not in the same sense) to be the trustees of their spiritual heritage, by which the world has profited so much. Their contributions to human welfare, to philanthropy, education, social justice and peace, have been out of all proportion to their numbers, wealth, or power. Despite the degrading conditions under which millions of them have been forced to live, drunkenness, brutality, and crime are found among them less frequently than among their neighbors.

3. The Jewish people have been singled out as the special victims of social reaction and brutal tyranny. They have been at the very focus of the world's struggle against fascism. Historical circumstance, no less than the traditions of thousands of years, sets them in a special relation to the causes of liberty, justice, and humanity — of monotheism in practice.

These statements are not debatable; ... can readily be documented by facts ... statistics. It may be immodest (according to the conventions of Anglo-... taste) for a Jew to make these ...ements — but they are true. The Jew ...s occupy a unique place in history and ...ontemporary society. This unique posi... gives him unique opportunities and ...efore unique obligations. No one ...ers at any instrument in the orchestra, ... the part of first trumpeter is inescap...y more prominent than that of the ...trabassoon. Democracy and religion ...e affirm the dignity of all individuals, ... their equality before God. Neverthe..., Harry S. Truman has a role in his...y dramatically different from that of ...n Jones; and he has a consequent re...nsibility which (for the present at ...st) does not weigh so heavily on John ...es. For—in a double sense, as the re... of election—President Truman has a ...ssion.

...ocation" No Substitute for "Election"

You may prefer to say that John Jones ... Harry Truman both have a "voca...n." Jones's is to be janitor of the "Five ... Ten," and Harry Truman's is to pro...e leadership for peace. But it is not belittling either Mr. Jones or his vocation if we regard Mr. Truman's vocation as infinitely more crucial. So with peoples. The contributions to the total life of humanity which the Bulgarians, the Choctaws, and the Afghans have made, or may make in the future, must be viewed with respect. But the vocation of Israel differs so much in degree that it differs in kind. The "merit of the fathers," the martyrdom of twenty centuries, the very precariousness of our position in the world today, impose upon us obligations we can hardly evade. In Palestine and in the Diaspora, we must be the teachers of mankind, the exemplars of religious living.

Not the only teachers, not the only exemplars. But with us it is as it was with our fathers at Sinai; according to the tale our Rabbis tell, God indeed offered the Torah to all nations; yet when they refused it, He did not insist. But when He offered it to Israel, He held the bulk of Sinai over their heads, threatening to crush them beneath the mountain if they rejected His law. To worship God with fervor and holiness, to serve Him in righteousness, to advance His kingdom by championing justice, liberty and peace—this must be the life and the mission of Israel.

Book Notes

TWO ESTIMATES OF AMERICAN CHARACTER

1.

...AINSTREAM, by Hamilton Basso. Reynal & Hitchcock, New York, 1943, ...246 *pp.* $2.50.

2.

...HE AMERICAN, by James Truslow Adams. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1943, 404 *pp.* $3.00.

HERE are two books about the American character, which, though one is written by a New Englander and the other by a Southerner, have a great deal in common. Adams would agree with Basso's assumption "that there is an American character and that it has been shaped by a series of influences, which, in their sum, may be taken to represent that other ideal fig-

ment we call the American tradition." But each uses a different approach to the subject and in fact, complements the other. Basso's is the biographic approach; Adams's is the broad historical approach. His book, however, is not another American history; though he follows the course of American history, he does so only from the point of view of its effect upon the molding of the American character. Both of them are convinced that the American is something new; hence the need for explaining him. Basso starts off directly with the remark, "to be an American is to be something new under the sun." Adams subtitles his book "The Making of a New Man."

I.

Basso imagines a typical American—"John Applegate, who owns and operates a corner drugstore in a small town. He is at home alone, musing upon his past, upon his ancestors, upon what makes him what he is, and wondering what the future has in store for him. The Americans who typify for him the ancestral tradition which molded him are: Cotton Mather, and John Smith, Thomas Jefferson and John Calhoun, Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Carnegie, Henry Adams and William Jennings Bryan, P. T. Barnum and Theodore Roosevelt, Huey P. Long and Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

To Basso, Captain Smith is the symbol of the American beginning, a Protestant Anglo-Saxon, who got things really started, "the only early colonial leader who fully understood the reality of the struggle in Virginia and who grasped the essential nature of the colonial economy." Cotton Mather represents the arch-embodiment of the Puritan, in whom "the inquisitorial nature of the Calvinist system is brought to its hardest and most disagreeable extremes." The Protestantism of the typical one - hundred - per - cent Anglo-Saxon American is even today heavily charged with the Calvinistic Puritanism of New England, which found its social representative in John Smith and got its religious tone from Cotton Mather.

Cavalier Virginia and theocratic Massachusetts both agreed on one basic issue: the right of the elect to rule. American democracy came out of the frontier and it was Thomas Jefferson who gave it its largest and finest statement. He was unable to understand the dynamics of the Industrial Revolution, but he still stands out as the apostle of freedom. John Calhoun represents the American as Aristocrat. Though he borrowed the general groundwork of Jefferson's thought, he erected a super-structure of aristocratic affirmation which in the end caused him to become the representative of reaction.

Abraham Lincoln is depicted as the American patron saint. "He was the one great man among us whose life was ruled by love. For this alone he could be hallowed in our memory — the best we are the best we can hope to be — and remain a symbol for all the world."

Basso picked Carnegie for his gallery of Americans because he typifies the American success story — from rags to riches. P. T. Barnum, the "Prince of Humbugs" is selected because he represents the American as "educator," the one who gave to the standards and values of American business civilization in the "Gilded Age" its most straightforward circulation in such books as "The Hub of Money Getting." Barnum seems a surprising choice as "educator," but Basso believes that John Applegate's principal instruction has been derived not from the educational system but from "those who carry Barnum's torch — the adventurers, the publicity people, the geniuses of promotion."

With the turn of the century we get a revolt on the part of such men as Henry Adams and Henry James against

te "ideals of millionairedom, of Barnum's rt of money-getting." But while "James ade a notable effort to oppose these eals of millionairedom with those of art, dams permitted himself to sink deeper nd deeper into the querulous misan-ropy which, in the end, was to become ttle more than the bored negation of a oiled and self-indulgent snob." In Wil-am Jennings Bryan and his "cross of old" speech we get a "last defiant shout-ng of the old, the familiar, the frontier hallenge — the people, not the elect, ave the right to rule." With the turn of he century, the hard struggle of the rontier was over. A continent had been on; the frontier now became "the illi-itable frontier of time." The turn of the entury found America full of smugness nd satisfaction and found most Ameri-ans in agreement with Beveridge that American sea-power, American law, merican institutions and the American ag were truly agencies of a superior ivilization and not improbably of God."

Theodore Roosevelt, "fit as a Bull Moose," is described as the American rogressive, who became president in a me "of ferment and dissatisfaction, of chnological and intellectual discovery, f challenge and counter-challenge." It as a period which saw the conflict be-ween science and religion, between capi-listic plutocracy and the populism of e frontier. Progressive intellectuals be-an to ask whether democracy was pos-ble. Though Theodore Roosevelt dra-atized progressivism, his revolt against ntrenched privilege was as much of a ilure as Bryan's. But what Roosevelt presented was submerged in his own rsonality. With him begins "twentieth ntury personalism in American govern-ent;" in him "the voices of unrest found eir ideal mouthpiece."

Huey P. Long, the Kingfish, is the merican as Demagogue. Basso sees Huey Long as an "heir" in one sense of John Calhoun, for "even as Calhoun proposed to alter the framework of democracy, denying its basic principles and speaking in terms that foreshadowed the creation of modern feudalism, so was Long to propose a complete jettisoning of the democratic system and bring to the language of totalitarianism, hitherto foreign in its accent, a rhythmical emphasis unmistakably American."

Franklin Delano Roosevelt came to the presidency at a time when our chief concern was whether democracy could meet and solve the problems of an industrial society. Roosevelt was no political philosopher. He was a great leader, whose greatness depended "not upon his rhetorical ability to sway the multitudes, but upon the articulation of those essential principles that lie at the heart of the democratic faith." The New Deal of Roosevelt, with its four major objectives —relief, recovery, reform and social security, all are part of one major objective—"to carry the nation forward to what might be called the modern stage of democratic realization — to the point, that is, where the immediate and direct interest of the state in the welfare of all its citizens, the propertyless as well as the propertied, is also recognized as essential to the democratic principle."

Basso sees America and the democratic faith on trial today. The American brings to the testing his memories of the past, his love of his native place, his willingness to adventure, his belief in tomorrow, his philosophy of moral materialism, and paradoxically his idealism. "And what can we hope for the American, for John Applegate, other than that the historians of the future will find that he marked a beginning and an end; that he came to a door and opened the door; that in the testing he both found and lost himself, knowing his identity as one man and his

greater identity as one man among all men, and that, after the time of the furnace, the time of promise was come again. To hope less would be to wish him less. To hope more — well, who dares?"

2.

If Basso's concern is with the peaks in the landscape of American history, Adams's is with the valleys and streams and sources and tributaries. It is a broader, more detailed study which deals only incidentally with men, and primarily with forces and causes and effects. But in retelling the story of America, Adams has an eye to those elements which molded the American character. It is impossible to summarize all of the factors he cites, and a few examples will suffice.

One factor which influenced Americanism from the very beginning down to the isolationists of the present day was "the three thousand mile stretch of stormy sea which separated the home country, and its power to enforce its authority, from the colonists who came to live up and down our coast. The dangers of the Atlantic crossing, the slowness of communication for many generations, and the remoteness of the English government, all helped to give the American a cockiness and self-assurance which have had much to do with his character, outlook on life and international regulation."

In the South "the fact that cities did not grow up with a working class population had two effects which greatly influenced the colony. It tended to reduce the number of workers who could readily be engaged for casual employment, and to accelerate the movement towards the land and independence." African slavery was introduced on a large scale; great estates were created with consequent loss of equality; opportunities of the yeoman farmers decreased; and a colonial aristocracy based on land, wealth, entail and primogeniture was founded.

Adams tries to trace the unity and the diversity of New England, and is also concerned with the theocracy and Puritanism of early Massachusetts. It is in this chapter that Adams is guilty of shocking prejudice, showing that even reputable historians have misconceptions about Jews, amounting to an anti-Jewish bias. He states that "had Puritan Massachusetts been permeated with the teachings of Christ instead of with those of Moses and the Prophets, its whole history would have been different . . . to a large extent the Old Testament is a hard and harsh, not seldom a cruel, book. But it is strong. Its God, as contrasted with the loving Father of the New Testament, is a God of wrath and war, and it is filled with characters like the Prophets, who believed that, whatever the multitude might say or do, they alone knew the views and aims of God." (pp. 75-6)

Adams, too, describes the struggle for democracy against the usurpations of the oligarch, the reaction against theocracy, the rule of the frontier, the story of the immigrants, the conquest of the wilderness. "The expansion in America was by chance to coincide with the machine age, and if America owes an infinite debt to the West, the West itself owes its rapid development, and the preservation of the union, to the machine." His book, however, deals largely with the past — with the period through the Civil War. There is only one short chapter called "From Union to Empire," which covers the period from 1865 to the present in a sketchy way.

In the Epilogue, Adams summarizes what he considers the American traits. The American has raised to a cult the flag and the woman. Though the American has a certain cockiness, he is, to a certain extent, not sure of himself. The American is a great individualist and yet a great "joiner." He wants to make the

ost of himself and his opportunities and t he has an intense desire for equality. The American thinks his country the iest in the world. He is a continental pansionist and a bitter opponent of er-seas expansion. He loves humor and good joke, and is apt to think his own e best. He is the most hospitable per- n in the world. The past means little him. He seeks comfort, "which he is ely to confuse with luxury, the latest yle, and labor saving devices which, ving him and his wife a bit of work in ie direction, make him work harder to rn the money to pay for them." He is pposed not to care about art, yet most the great art is now housed in Amer- a and America leads the world in archi- cture and in other directions. He is sup- osed to be practical in his science, yet s research laboratories are in reach of l.

He has never liked war, yet he has en ready to fight at the drop of a hat. he American of each generation looks own on the alien immigrant, but when e is in contact with him, gets along with im all right. "He enjoys making money, r the sake of the game and for what e can do with it, not only for himself r prestige and power, but for his wife nd children, his community and the rest f the world." The American is willing o take a chance; he is amazingly versa- le. He has literally, the American spirit. He prefers his music, good or bad, anned' on the radio to making any him- lf, good or bad. The American has al- ays been isolationist, yet when he has chance, he travels to other countries and ants to do business all over the globe. he American is always in a hurry. He ves speed and he loves height. He is asy-going, not only in making money nd spending or giving it away, but even hen it is stolen from him. He always has a 'why worry' attitude. He desires to be helpful and kindly and to work together with others. The ordinary American subordinates his mind to his will. He has an exalted belief in the possibilities of education for any and every one. He wants as little government as possible, except when he can get something out of it. He loves freedom. American leaders have all been chosen by the people.

The American has ever been the dreamer. Today there is no greater concentration of wealth and power than that in America, an almost empty continent three centuries ago. It has been made by dreams—dreams of opportunity, dreams of reward, dreams of equality, derams of freedom. Perhaps, after all, dreams have unknown power, and the greatest dream humanity has dreamed as yet for its daily hope has been the *American Dream,* which has brought millions of disillusioned and ambitious to our shores from all the nations of the earth. It has been a dream for all men to follow in freedom and in their own way."

Adams, in his epilogue, gives us a view of the typical American, Basso of the typical Americans. Both emphasize many similar traits and the historic conditions out of which they developed. Adams is more at home in Colonial America than in the industrial America of the present. Basso has a firmer grasp of the nature of the clashes and conflicts of today.

What is the American character and what are the problems the American faces? Adams has given us an insight into our beginnings, into the conditions that molded American tradition and American character in its formative period. Basso has given us portraits of typical Americans and of the internal problem which faces democratic America today. Together they give us a composite portrait and a more rounded sketch.

SAMUEL DININ

CORRESPONDENCE

Responses to Our Editorial, "In Memory of Six Million Dead"

Sirs:

My attention was called to the editorial in THE RECONSTRUCTIONIST of December 14, 1945, under the caption, "In Memory of Six Million Dead," in which the writer states that nothing has been written or done to commemorate the martyrs of Nazi cruelty. In the newly revised Union Prayer Book, Vol. II, page 316 a special prayer was introduced for the martyrs of this tragic war. In addition to this, the Committee on Ceremonies recommended the institution of a Hitler Purim to commemorate the suffering of our people during these tragic years. They were told to work out details and then to communicate with the Orthodox and Conservative groups to see whether some kind of an agreement could be reached.

I believe that you will agree that the rabbinical organizations should more properly institute such a day than a secular organization like the American Jewish Conference which has shown itself incapable of deciding anything for the American Jew.

ISAAC R. MARCUSON,
Administrative Secretary,
Central Conference of American Rabbis.

Sirs:

May I suggest a form of memorial, which would be perpetual.

I would suggest that a statement be made by organized American Jews that any Jew who returns to Germany, or who does business with Germany, within the next century will have the contempt of his fellow Jews; and that every Jew now living in Germany should make every effort to leave the country. "*Judenrein*" Germany would therefore be by our choice!

A sculpture monument should be erected by the U.N.O. in Germany as a symbol expressing Germany's cruelty, retribution, and the hope for her normal revival. Perhaps this would be more effective than other means of re-education.

Let us learn the "Song of Buchenwald." It is our song too. Let us sing it on all our memorial occasions, as a reminder of our torment, and our faith in God.

Let us set aside one day a year, perhaps during the period of the Warsaw Ghetto rebellion, for Memorial. That day should be considered a day of lamentation, as well as of thanksgiving for our continued survival as a people.

As an immediate symbol, every Jew should tax himself the earnings of one day's work to help rehabilitate the victims of the Nazis, for as many years as it may be necessary. We are victims together and should so identify ourselves.

A devoted reader.

Sirs:

I know of few ways of "memorializing" six million dead European Jews that are better than making it possible for the remaining to live in safety.

You might reiterate again and again *ad nauseum* (if such a term is even appropriate in this instance), the need for such immediate material aid. I even think that such a time should be devoted not to "religious philosophy" discussions but to exerting all our energies for this gigantic duty that confronts us all.

JULIUS CHERINSKY.

REALITIES AND VALUES

(Continued from Page 9)

by what he saw or heard, and (4) an examination of the changes that have occurred in the writer's own views about Jews and Jewish problems as a result of his observations in the armed forces. Essays may be submitted in any language. We like the Yivo's viewpoint as revealed in this project. Why wait until events have sunk into the remote past before collecting the data by which their significance can be interpreted?